



TO: Cheryl King
FROM: John Crocker
DATE: April 16, 2008
SUBJECT: Governance Discussion Framework

This document is intended to describe a potential strategy of how the reach a decision on the governance and funding issues by the end of 2008. It is draft only and meant to provide the Board with an idea of how a resolution can be reach on the governance issues facing the region.

Base Schedule

	March			April			May			June			July			August			September			October			November			December		
TPB Board Meeting																														
TPB Committee Meetings																														
Funding Group																														
Public Engagement on Concept 3																														
Concept 3 Revising Time																														
Development of Initial Proposal																														
Funding Group Refinement of Governance Suggestions																														
Full Board Refinement of Governance Suggestions																														
Transition of Standing Committees																														
Transition of Work Activities																														

Initial Proposal

To get an an initial proposal, a specific framework would be used. This framework would focus on specific issues and challenges in as much of an agency neutral manner as possible to approach the governance issue in a logical, thoughtful process. The idea is to develop a a list of commonly agreed upon problems or activities needed to be undertaken by the governance structure before introducing the

challenges of agency perceptions and past history. The framework consists of five major areas which build upon each other. General agreement about each area would be needed before proceeding to the next area of discussion. The five areas are:

1. General Principals
2. Aims or Specific Issues
3. General Span of Decision Making
4. Known Challenges
5. Initial Proposal

This structure is designed to clearly lay out a rationale behind the initial proposal and lay a framework within which constructive discussion about differences in structure can take place.

General Principals

This area of discussion consists of the general principals upon which the governance discussion will occur. Many of these have been discussed at great lengths, but this discussion would be to agree upon a specific set of principals which could include such principals as “Pay-to-Play,” “Flexibility,” “Coordinated” or “Equitable.” In other words, spelling out the big ideas that represent that foundation for the governance discussion.

Aims or Specific Issues

This area would identify and hopefully reach agreement on the major areas where the lack of a regional governance structure is hindering the region’s ability to provide the regional transit system it desires. Some of the specific areas or issues that have arisen of the course of the TPB’s work and previous work that might be addressed in this area are:

- Lack of transfer agreements between the different operators – MARTA has agreements with each operator, but they do not have agreements with other operators (i.e. CCT and GCT)
- Lack of paratransit fare transfer agreements
- Lack of regional data information center – smaller operators indicate that they receive more requests from data from other public agencies (GDOT, county DOT, the general public) than they have staff to handle, but because of government transparency acts, they must respond. A regional clearinghouse of data would help alleviate this pressure.
- Some systems opting out of federal reporting – This results in less allocation of federal formula funds for the Atlanta region
- Expense of data collection for smaller operators – Smaller operators find the data collection requirement onerous – having one overarching agency to contract with for data collection would enable the smaller operators to participate in the regional data collection effort that can yield slightly more federal resources
- Lack of identification or agreement of operator for major fixed guideway transit projects

- Improving coordination of current services – TPB Service coordination Council helps identify areas for cooperation (April meeting focused on March 1^{4th} tornado response)

The idea of behind this area is to reach agreement or at least identify the areas and issues where the need for a regional governance structure would help not only implement a vision plan like Concept 3, but also help address the current transit challenges faced by our region on a day-to-day basis.

General Span of Decision Making

It is likely the the challenges and issues identified in the previous discussion area will span the range from activities that need coordination and activity every day to more long-term, high level policy decision making. This area of discussion will be to identify whether the specific issues identified as needed addressing can be resolved with staff interaction, need quick action (i.e. potentially coordination in the event of a service disruption), and setting out what is the overall requirement for decision making needed. For instance, does a specific issue always have to rise to a full vote of a policy board or can it be handled at a lower level of staff decision making? This area of discussion will attempt at what level of decision making the identified aims or specific issues identified as needed addressing through regional decision making should take place.

Known Challenges

Once the TPB has hopefully reached some level of comfort with the general principals, the identified issues they would like regional governance to solve, and a general idea at which level of decision making is appropriate for each issue, the next discussion is to identify our known challenges of perception, history, and politics. This area would be to frankly lay out each of the specific concerns of the TPB members that must be addressed.

Initial Proposal

Working through these different areas, the staff can then present potential governance structures for addressing the regional governance discussion.

TPB Governance Activities Timeframe

While the above progression from one area to another seems logical and from one step to the next, staff completely recognizes that this is likely to be an iterative process interacting with the board. Primarily the staff role may be to help provide information and coordinate discussion amongst the various members of the board to help make sure that the governance discussion reaches some form of resolution. While this will be difficult, the TPB in its adopted work program has identified that resolution of regional governance is one of our major aims and staff will attempt to make sure that this goal is met.

May / June

In May and June staff working with the board, either the full board or a small group of the board, will try to work through the first four major areas of discussion – Principals, Aims/Issues, Span of Decision making, and Known Challenges. The goal would be to develop an initial proposal to take to the committee meetings in July.

July / August

The July TPB Committee meetings would be dedicated to discussing initial potential governance scenarios. This would provide a month to for the full board to consider the options, discussing amongst themselves, and providing feedback before discussing in the August Board Meeting. The August board meeting is also aimed to the first time the staff team will be able to bring forward several funding / financing scenarios. At this point the Board will have been considering different governance scenarios and the August meeting will be the opportunity to realign the governance discussions with the funding discussions and to talk about these options.

September / October

It is likely that further refinement will have to take place, similar to the work down with the system development leading to additional discussions through September and October. This will likely involve the individual discussion among the board with support provided by staff as needed for information and coordination of meetings.